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Ayutla, with brief but very helpful explanatory notes here and there from the editor. It should be examined by all interested in the political evolution of Mexico, our war with that country, or the characters and aims of such national figures as Juárez and Comonfort. We are greatly indebted to the editor for this and many other labors of love in the field of Mexican history, where so much work of the kind needs to be done.

JUSTIN H. SMITH.

#### TEXT-BOOKS

*The Study of History in the Elementary Schools: Report to the American Historical Association by the Committee of Eight.* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909, pp. xx, 141.) This report is the result of four years' labor upon the part of a committee appointed in 1905 by the American Historical Association, and composed of James Alton James, chairman, Henry E. Bourne, Eugene C. Brooks, Wilbur F. Gordy, Mabel Hill, Julius Sachs, Henry W. Thurston, and J. H. Van Sickle. Two topics were assigned to the committee: the suggestion of a course of study in history for elementary schools, and the consideration of the most desirable preparation for the elementary history teacher. Each of the topics is treated separately in the report; there is outlined a course of study for eight grades which is almost in the nature of a syllabus, and there are supplementary chapters upon the preparation of the teacher, the method of presentation, typical lessons, illustrative material, and present conditions of history teaching in elementary schools not only of the United States, but of France, Germany, and England as well. The outline of the course of study is, however, the real crux of the report, for the character and extent of the teacher's preparation will be moulded in large degree by the character of the prescribed course of study.

The committee has accepted the view that some history shall be taught in every grade in the elementary schools, and has accordingly outlined an eight-year course of study. The course is based upon three fundamental principles: (1) that the plan should be adaptable to present conditions in the greater number of American schools, and not be in the form of ideal attainable in a very few schools, or by a future generation; (2) that the study of history should centre about American history, including not only events happening in America but those in the ancient or medieval or modern European world which have influenced American history; and (3) that a subject once taught should be taught thoroughly, and not thereafter be repeated. To the last proposition, all, probably, who have had experience of the deadening effect of repetition, will agree; upon the first and second, however, there is room for much difference of opinion.

The centring of the study upon American history is the most pronounced feature of the report, it is the one which has thus far been

most severely criticized, and it is that which will, if adopted, require the greatest reconstruction of courses of study and school programmes.

Accepting the point of view of the committee, it can be truthfully said that its work is well done. The course for grades one and two is confined to descriptions of Indian life and the treatment of national holidays. In grade three there are historical scenes and persons from different ages. The fourth and fifth grades take up scenes and persons in American history. Upon the sixth year the committee has expended its best thought, giving an extended analysis and detailed references to topics of interest to Americans from Greek, Roman, medieval, and English history, and closing with medieval trade conditions, the discovery of America, and the beginning of national rivalry for the new world. Grade seven opens with the permanent settlement of America by European nations and carries the story through colonial growth and rivalry to the close of the American Revolution. In grade eight the subject is continued into the national period and the course closes with a statement of the problems of the republic and with short analyses of recent changes in England, France, Germany, and Italy.

The committee has not only given a good analysis, but it has supplemented it with lists of books for teachers and for scholars. In addition, for the last three years it has indicated its estimate of the value of each of the principal topics. The plan is a decided advance over the courses of study in many of our schools, and it deserves to receive a wide adoption. Incidentally its adoption would necessitate two welcome changes, an increase in the efficiency of the teacher of history, probably by the establishment of the group or departmental system, and the creation of a series of better text-books.

A. E. M.

*Outlines of General History.* By V. A. Renouf, B.A. Edited by William Starr Myers, Ph.D. (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1909, pp. xx, 501.) A single volume presenting the leading facts in the history of the world seems to be justified in this instance. The author intended it for use primarily in the schools of the Far East, especially in those of the Chinese Empire. Emphasis is placed on "those events and institutions a knowledge of which is most useful to persons interested in public reforms in the East". Throughout, there is a fair-minded presentation of the facts which "show the value of high ideals of the truth and the advantage of liberal institutions". The general content of most of the chapters is not essentially different from that to be found in other general histories except that Japanese and Chinese history is appropriately introduced and emphasized.

If the general purpose is kept in mind, we excuse the author, evidently an American teacher in Pei Yang University, when he devotes only three and four lines to the settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth respectively; a scant page to the formation, adoption, and analysis of